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ABSTRACT

Over time, a policy can be modified and its implementation may take a form different than originally intended by policymakers. This paper presents findings of a case study that examined the implementation of a comprehensive education plan for improving secondary education using systems technology in Malawi. Data were gathered through document analysis, a survey of 36 Ministry of Education and Culture (MOEC) administrators and 240 school-level administrators, and interviews with 10 policymakers. It is argued that the MOEC's use of a bureaucratic model to implement a complex policy and its failure to include teachers and building-level administrators in decision making resulted in partial implementation, especially of those aspects aimed at achieving qualitative improvement. School principals/headmasters and teachers reported that they wanted to do a good job, but did not receive adequate information about the system changes they were expected to implement. The findings demonstrate the importance of providing meaningful involvement to all people expected to implement educational policy. A feeling of ownership is required for the development of commitment. Many teachers felt so marginalized by a strong central bureaucracy that they suggested a more appropriate name for the MOEC--the "Ministry of Dedication and Torture," implying that although the Ministry expected dedication from teachers, it failed to treat them as professionals. Changes are recommended to: (1) include headmasters and teachers in the policymaking process; (2) allocate realistic financial resources for implementation; (3) provide adequate training for those who will implement the policy; and (4) invest in clear communication between the central government and school-level educators. Sixteen tables are included. (LMI)

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ABSTRACT

This is a case study of the implementation of a comprehensive education plan for improving secondary education using systems technology. It recognizes that over time a policy can be modified and implementation may take a form different from what was originally intended including being co-opted and being carried out in ways that do not make sense to building level administrators and teachers. It is argued that use of a bureaucratic model of implementation adopted by the Ministry of Education and Culture of the Malawi Government for what was a complex policy with inadequate participation of teachers and building level administrators, in large part, accounted for partial implementation, especially those aspects aimed at achieving qualitative improvement. It is suggested that choosing the most efficacious approach to implementation is an important step in ensuring effective system-wide changes which by their very nature can be difficult. In this case study school principals/ headmasters and teachers who wanted to do a good job felt that they were not provided adequate information about system changes they were expected to implement. In addition, meaningful involvement of all those whose support in decisions that contribute to keeping education as a top priority is important. Such participants need to own the decisions and fully embrace the policy and its implications, rather than feel that they are going through a process that they do not understand, and about which they have no conviction. Many teachers felt so marginalized by a strong central bureaucracy that they thought that a more accurate name for the Ministry of Education and Culture was "Ministry of Dedication and Torture," implying that while the Ministry expected teachers to be dedicated to their work, it did not treat them well as professionals.

Introduction

This case study of the Ministry of Education and Culture (MOEC) in Malawi offers some suggestions about effective implementation of policy for reforming an educational system that was designed to serve a colonial social and political system. Consistent with the perception of the colonial administration, Malawi (Nyasaland as the country was then called) was of

marginal interest to Britain because it did not satisfy important strategic interests and lacked commercially viable mineral resources. Given that Nyasaland was essentially a source of cheap unskilled or semi-skilled labor for two neighboring colonies of Southern Rhodesia (Zimbabwe) and Northern Rhodesia (Zambia), the administration needed only a small number of secondary educated indigenous people for clerical and middle level management positions.

The 1973/74-1980/81 Secondary Education Plan designed by the government of independent Malawi was a comprehensive policy, intended to address shortages of skilled and professional work force that had been created by the conservative and *ad hoc* policies of the previous administration. The policy attempted to respond to questions of increased access, equity, and quality, and especially issues of relevance of second level education to support the country's development efforts. Specific objectives of the policy included (1) introducing a greater degree of relevance of this level of education to the country's needs (adding a vocational component to the curriculum); (2) ensuring the maximum and efficient utilization of existing facilities and resource inputs; (3) aiming at further development at the sixth form level; and (4) achieving an increase in the participation ratio from 2 percent in 1973 to 15 percent in 1981 (Reyes, 1974).

The implementation outcomes of the policy fell far short of expectations. The introduction of technical subjects did not go beyond 12 schools in which they were initially introduced and commercial subjects on the other hand, never took root in the secondary school curriculum; the sixth form college never enrolled more than 25 students at any one time (the planned enrollment was 720 - Education Development Plan 1973-80 pp. 140-141 Tables V.9-11; V.19) and the program was abandoned in 1984; internal efficiency measures of double-bunking never took place; only a limited number of students in urban centers attended night school (the number of attendees, in fact declined from 1,554 to 1,292 over the plan period); Malawi School Certificate Examination pass rate leveled off at about 55 percent; and the enrollment ratio was about 5 percent at the end of the plan period (Nyirenda, 1991).

The Implementation Problem

The importance of implementation as a separate process from planning, though related to it, has long been recognized both by practitioners and scholars. Planning literature is full of stories of failure of plans to materialize, and the systems planning paradigm which was dominant in the 1960s and 1970s with the related rational or top-down approach to implementation have accounted for much of implementation failure. Mazmanian and Sabatier (1983) point out that a general systems approach is limited in its utility as a tool for providing adequate understanding of the policy process, adding that an adequate understanding must include contributions that have been made regarding policymaking within those bodies immediately responsible for implementation, that is bureaucracies.

Some literature points out that implementation of policy by some Third World governments in Africa, Asia, and Latin America fails because the policies are unrealistic, not feasible, and there is less involvement at the formulation stage by the public than is the case in developed countries (Smith, 1973; Grindle, 1980, Quick, 1980 and Craig, 1987). A further explanation of implementation failure in these countries is a lack of qualified personnel, insufficient direction and control from political leaders, opposition to the policy itself and the rampant corruption. According to Rondinelli, Middleton, & Verspoor (1990), problems of implementation may also arise from (1) the complexity of the reform proposal ("Christmas tree" projects); (2) unpredictability of education projects which is a function of size, time and diversity of innovations; (3) inappropriateness of management strategies since different projects require different strategies of implementation; failure to focus on school level changes; and failure to assess the capacity of the organizations to manage implementation.

A generalization about differences in factors that affect implementation in Third World and Developed countries as suggested by some scholars is difficult to sustain and largely unwarranted. The Elementary and Secondary Education Act (1965), Title I, which was an attempt by the Federal Government of the United States of America to redistribute resources for the benefit of students from low socioeconomic status families was a sweeping

reform (Murphy, 1971). This policy faced problems of implementation similar to those experienced by developing countries such as competing interests at various levels of government, government agencies, and interest groups. Complexity of policy or reform regardless of the developmental status of a country, has been found to be a potent factor in limiting implementation. At the same time, the argument about the inaccessibility of the policy formulation process in Third World Countries as a differentiating factor between developed and developing countries is problematic. Some literature on Third World Countries clearly confirms that some of these countries have structures that provide for participation at the grassroots level. For example, Ayoade (1983) quoting Simmons pointed out that the institutional framework and administrative arrangements for economic planning are well standardized in some African Countries. This literature confirms that District or Divisional Development Committees (DDCs) were actively involved in national planning including the development of education at grassroots level in Cameroon, Zambia, Kenya, Malawi, and Tanzania.

Financial resources have been singled out as a particularly potent factor for adversely impacting implementation efforts. This is particularly the case for Sub Sahara Africa whose economies have experienced a downward trend that began with the oil price explosion of the 1970's and accelerated with the plunge of commodity prices. Thus, the debt of Sub Sahara Africa alone amounted to over 180 billion dollars and the debt burden caused by borrowing reached 110 percent in 1991 (Darnton, 1994). Malawi's share of the debt at this time was $1.8 billion. Resources for social programs are never enough for any country. However, it is fair to say that the demand for resources in most Third World Countries far exceeds the availability of such resources and their mobilization both locally or from external sources can be difficult. Moreover, many reforms in these countries must take place under great environmental uncertainty of both economic and socio-political nature. While it is misleading to down-play the differences in the challenges to implementation of policy between developed and developing countries, such differences as exist must in large part be in terms of scale and context rather than substance.

Bureaucratic Model of Implementation

Although Malawi had a structure for broader participation in education policymaking in the form of the DDC, it chose not to use this structure. This was in spite of the participatory planning and implementation effort during the establishment of day secondary schools created in 1961 for each of the 21 districts that represented cooperation between the Central Government, and the local communities through the District Councils. The bureaucratic model of implementation was chosen in the Malawi case. This model has much in common with the rational or systems model which defines implementation as "the execution of and doing as the plan directs" (Adams, Cornbleth, and Plank, 1989). This approach views implementation as part of the linear process that begins with policy design, followed by implementation, and evaluation. It assumes that the initial policy objectives are correct and do not require modification in the process of implementation. While policy makers have a responsibility for designing the objectives of the policy and assigning those responsibilities and standards of performance to sub-units consistent with the set objectives. The bureaucratic model goes further by maintaining a focus on the control of routine and the discretion of those responsible for putting policy into effect. This emphasis arises from the recognition that individual workers exercise a great deal of discretion in their day to day work. In a highly centralized bureaucratic system of implementation a few supervisors have the major problem of exercising control over a large number of headmasters and teachers. Consequently, implementation tends to be incremental rather than comprehensive. The major concern of supervisory staff from the central bureaucracy's emphasis is on how to ensure the compliance of the subordinates, rather than how to enlist their sustained support and commitment to implementation. This is achieved through such strategies as prescription, enabling, incentives, and deterrence (Bardach, 1979). The favorite strategies for the bureaucratic approach include prescription which requires subordinates to do as required, and deterrence which involves meeting out penalties to bring in line those who do not comply with prescriptions.

In education, control by supervisors over school level activities can be problematic for a number of reasons including insufficiency of resources both monetary and human from the overseeing agency, the complexity of policy both in terms of objectives and scope of change envisioned; and the multiplicity of layers of decision bands involved in the process (e.g., international aid agencies, the Treasury, MOEC, school level administrators and teachers). In Malawi any and all these factors could have played a role in reducing the impact of the policy in system improvement. The focus of this case study however, is on the perceived roles of supervisory staff at the headquarters of MOEC *versus* those of school level administrators and teachers.

The implementation of a comprehensive policy such as Malawi's Secondary Education Development Plan, 1973-80 had components with clearly specified goals and tasks, a known technology for achieving those goals as well as innovative components with varied and ever-changing tasks that require constant adaptation and re-definition (Benveniste, 1987). Appropriate strategies for effective implementation that match the tasks (i.e., routine or innovative), predisposition of front-line implementers--headmasters and teachers--are a *sine qua non*.

In this case study the concepts that structure the inquiry include policy message, tasks and technologies, organizational structure, environmental conditions, implementers, and monitoring and evaluation. For effective implementation to occur using a bureaucratic model requires unambiguous policy directives (Sabatier and Mazmanian, 1979). It is important at the policy formulation stage to consider (1) whether policies can be implemented under foreseeable circumstances; and (2) whether the problems being addressed are tractable. In the case of the Malawi Plan, certain components were clearly spelt out. For example, access was planned to increase from a participation ratio of 2 to 15 percent. However, whether adequate resources would be available over the plan period is another matter, since the budget was subjected to annual review and priorities could change. The curriculum improvements such as vocationalization of education, were ambiguous since this type of development takes place interactively. The author hypothesized

that communication was problematic between supervisory staff at the headquarters and headmaster and teachers at the building level.

Tasks may either be routine or non routine. Increasing access in the plan was routine and therefore easy to carry out using a bureaucratic model provided that implementers knew what to do and were willing and were provided appropriate incentives. The author hypothesized that building level administrators and teachers did not have sufficient specific knowledge or training to carry out the tasks required by the plan.

Important questions under organizational structure include determining the best way to organize people, deciding on which organization to entrust particular action, dealing with inter- and intraorganizational relationships and interactions. MOEC's structure for implementing policy is a functional one in that it emphasizes large power distance between headquarters implementers and school level administrators and teachers, and attempts to avoid high uncertainty and high levels of collective responsibility (Malawi Government, Education Service Review, 1988) by using a bureaucratic approach to implementation.

The environment includes political, socio-cultural, and economic conditions. Once a policy is passed by the legislative process implementation depends, to a large extent, on the continued political support as manifested in resource allocation decisions. In Malawi where there was one party rule, that support was even more crucial since only one view prevailed in such an environment. Given that education was given a relatively low priority compared to other publicly supported services e.g., agriculture, and transportation, relatively less adequate resources were made available to it. In fact, education expenditure as a percentage of government expenditure, declined from 16.2 percent to 11.4 percent and the secondary education component went down from 19 percent to 14 percent. And yet, during much of the plan period (1973-80) the economy as measured by Gross Domestic Product, was growing at the rate of 7.1 percent.

According to Weatherly and Lipsky (1977) front-line implementers or "street level bureaucrats" determine whether or not policy is implemented. These

street level bureaucrats are in contact with the local situation and have much discretion and autonomy in a large and highly centralized education system. These front-line implementers, also known as micro-implementers in the secondary education improvement policy of Malawi were secondary school headmasters and teachers. The Macro-implementers included planners; senior education officials including heads of divisions such as secondary, teacher training, administration, and curriculum; inspectors of schools of various subjects, the Project Implementation Planning Unit personnel; and building contractors. All these implementers must not only be willing but should have the knowledge and skills to perform as well as being motivated to do so. Communication between the macro- and micro-level implementers is critical. If the implementers lack commitment or disagree with the policy because it goes against their values or because they do not agree with it, implementation may be sabotaged, partial, or co-opted (i.e., implemented differently than originally intended).

Monitoring and evaluation helps to identify performance gaps, by identifying what an organization is actually doing in relation to what it is expected to do and providing explanations for any modifications to policies. Given that the Malawi secondary education development policy was comprehensive, it had both routine and innovative components, and therefore effective monitoring and evaluation required both mechanistic and adaptive approaches. What was even more critical was to know when to use the different approaches either singly or in combination.

Design of Study

This study which is based on a survey including interviews carried out by the author in May-August 1990 shows that even in a one-party-state a top-down approach to implementation can adversely affect policy outcomes. The major question in this case study is how did the use of a bureaucratic approach to implementation contribute to partial implementation of the policy to improve secondary education in Malawi? Three approaches--documents, mail survey, and interview were used to obtain data from both micro- and micro-implementers. The documents reviewed included annual reports,

policy reviews, and annual education budget documents; while a purposive sample of 36 MOEC headquarters administrators, and a random sample of 240 school level administrators, and teachers were surveyed. in addition, a purposive sample of 10 policy makers was interviewed. Participants in the surveys and interviewees were selected because they were either administrators, teachers or policy makers during the plan period who therefore, played a direct role in the implementation process. One major problem that needs to be recognized in this study is the effect of time on people's memories. The survey was conducted almost 10 years after the plan period.

Impleme··tation Questions

The fol ng process and outcome questions were investigated through the mail survey and interviews:

(1) To what extent were micro-level implementers involved in the policy formulation process? How did the level of their involvement influence implementation?

(2) How clear was the identification of macro and micro-level implementers of the policy by the policy makers of MOEC? and how did this affect implementation outcomes?

(3) How adequate was the training provided to micro-level implementers?

(4) How accurate were forecasts for personnel and financial resources for implementing the plan?

(5) How clear were the communications and instructions from the macro- to the micro-implementers?

Sampling

The study basically involved the policymaking and implementing community. This community is made up of senior administrators and professional staff at the Ministry of Education and Culture, headmasters, and teachers during the implementation period of this policy. The headquarters staff included general administrators such as the Principal Secretary, Deputy Secretary, Chief Education Officer, Principal Education Officer (Secondary Administration), professional staff of the inspectorate, planning and project implementation unit, other professional officers. Because incomplete records were kept on who participated in the implementation process among the macro-implementers, a "snow ball" method was used to identify the 36 administrators that were included in this sub-sample.

The second sub-population in the study was composed of teachers and headmasters from the 60 secondary schools throughout Malawi. The total number of teachers and headmasters ranged from 681 at the beginning of the plan period to 774 at the end of it. Considering that this sub system had between 24.2 percent and 39.6 percent expatriate teachers and headmasters, it was not surprising that the accessible population was only 456 (i.e., 254 men and 202 women). This was a potential accessible population because over the years some of them had changed jobs, had retired and their contact addresses were not available or died.

A random sample of 240 teachers, headmasters and headmistress (i.e., 120 members of each sex including a total of 41 headmasters and headmistresses) was drawn. Since only 12 schools (20 percent of the secondary schools) were designed teaching practical subjects (home economics, agriculture, commercial studies, metal work, and woodwork), 50 teachers in this area were included in the sample to ensure representativeness of the vocational component of the curriculum.

Instrumentation and Responses

Two questionnaires containing mainly differential semantics Likert-type questions were designed to collect data on the perceptions of both macro- and

micro- level implementers (see Nyirenda, 1991). Some of the items were common to both macro- and micro-level implementers. These instruments were pre- and post pilot tested with 5 micro implementers and 7 headmasters/teachers respectively to estimate their reliability among respondents over time. The coefficients of stability were .7952 (macro-implementers) and .8514 (micro-implementers) and the latter was significant at the .05 level (Nyirenda, 1991).

Of the 240 questionnaires mailed out to headmasters and teachers, 164 were usable (i.e. a response rate of 68.3 percent). Male respondents accounted for 98 (57.9 percent), while females accounted for the remaining 69 (42.1 percent). Headmasters accounted for (25.0 percent) and 45 (27.3 percent) were teachers of practical subjects. A follow-up of 10 non-respondents revealed that some of the teachers could not respond because they were on summer vacation or attending to other duties such as grading examination scripts, away from their normal duty stations. Two non-respondents specifically mentioned that they were unaware of the plan and were therefore not a legitimate part of the sample.

Of the 36 administrators to whom questionnaires were mailed, 30 responded (a response rate of 83.3 percent). Most of the remaining six who did not respond were sent reminders including personal visits by the researcher without success. In addition, one-on-one interviews were conducted by the researcher with 10 subjects from the Ministries of Finance, Economic Planning and Development Division, Education and Culture, Office of the President, and the University of Malawi.

Findings

For long-term policies implemented over a long period of time outcomes are affected by decisions at the policy formulation stage and during the implementation process. In this analysis of Malawi's education policy implementation data have been tallied and appropriate statistical indices computed to assess how a mismatch between the nature of policy and the top-

down strategy adopted to implement it shortchanged the secondary education improvement process for Malawi.

Involvement in Policymaking

Respondents were asked to identify the main players in the policy formulation process of the provisions of the 1973/74 - 1980/81 policy to develop secondary education in Malawi, among 12 agencies and groups of personnel. Frequencies reflecting the extent of influence by each group, means, and standard deviations to facilitate the ranking of the groups according to the order of the intensity of their involvement, are presented in the Appendix A. The Ministry of Education and Culture was rated high (i.e., 4 and 5) on a 5-point Likert-type scale on its influence over the provisions for the Secondary Education Development Plan by 26 of the 30 respondents (i.e. 92.9% of the respondents); Ministry of Finance was in the second position with a high rating by 20 (69.0%); and Economic Planning and Development Division came 3rd with 18 respondents (56.7%). Headmasters and teachers were rated high by only 8 (28.6 percent) of the respondents. These findings which were corroborated by macro-level implementers who were interviewed, confirm that teachers and headmasters had low influence on the policy formulation process.

A further analysis, using the t-test to establish the cut-off points (see Table 1) produced a classification of policy makers of : 'Insiders', 'Near Circle', 'Far Circle', Sometime Players' and the 'Often-Forgotten Players' (Marshall, Mitchell, & Wirt, 1986) . This analysis produced 4 clusters of policymakers.

Table 1
Classification of policy makers influential in the Provisions of the 1973/74 -1980/81 Plan

Variable Pairs	N	Means	Std Dev	T-value	DF	2-tail Prob
MOEC	27	4..6296	0.884	3.4	26	.002*
FIN1	27	3.8519	1.292			
FIN1	25	4.000	1.225	1.09	24	.286
CAB1	25	5.5200	1.686			
FIN1	27	3.9259	1.238	2.26	26	.032*
DPMT	27	3.1852	1.272			
DPMT	27	3.1852	1.272	1.26	26	.217
SESH	27	2.7407	1.745			
DPMT	25	3.1600	1.313	4.45	24	.000*
AGRIC1	25	1.7600	1.165			
AGRIC1	25	1.7600	1.165	0.68	24	.503
MBS	25	1.5600	1.474			

Key MOEC = Ministry of Education, FIN1 = Ministry of Finance, DPMT = Department of Personnel Management and Training, CAB = The Cabinet, SESH = Teachers and Headmasters, AGRIC1 = Ministry of Agriculture, MBS = Malawi Book Service, DF = Degrees of Freedom.

The t-test results in Table 1 show that the mean rating of influence by the Ministry of Education is significantly different from all the other agencies and therefore is in a category of its own. The means of the Ministry of Finance,

Economic Planning and Development Division, and the Cabinet are not significantly different and therefore they belong to the same classification, Personnel Management and Training, School of Education, and Teachers and Headmasters also belong to one classification, and lastly Ministries of Agriculture, Works and Supplies, and Trade and Industry and the Malawi Book Service also belong to the same category. In summary the players in the Malawi education policy of concern in this study may be classified as follows:

Classification	**Agency/Group**
Insiders	Ministry of Education and Culture
Near Circle	Ministry of Finance
	Economic Planning and Development Division
	The Cabinet
Far Circle	Department of Personnel Management and Training
	School of Education, University of Malawi
	Secondary School Teachers and Headmasters
Sometime Players and Often-Forgotten Players	Ministry of Agriculture
	Ministry of Works and Supplies
	Ministry of Trade and Industry
	Malawi Book Service.

Teachers and headmasters were "Far Circle" players.

Identification of Implementers

In this study respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which policymakers identified those who would take action on the various policy objectives. At the same time the degree of support the implementers gave the policy, including their commitment to it, and implementation outcomes were also considered.

Respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which implementers were specified by the policymakers for each of the policy objectives. The objective

for which implementers were most clearly specified (68.9 percent) was increasing enrollments (see Appendix A). The objective of constructing additional buildings was perceived as having most clearly specified implementers by 63.3 percent was next. These two objectives of the policy are amenable to direct action from implementers at the macro-level (i.e., from the headquarters of the Ministry of Education), and therefore the high specification does not come as a surprise. However, as shown in Appendix B the implementers for practical subjects were also most clearly specified by a significant number of respondents (60.0 percent). This would appear to characterize the programmed or top-down approach that was adopted for what is a major innovation (Rondinelli, Middleton, Verspoor, 1990), and the exclusion of building level people shortchanged implementation.

Other policy objectives such as internal efficiency (i.e., use of existing resources - physical, personnel, and financial) were identified as having clearly specified implementers by 56.6 percent, and 43.3 percent and 41.4 percent of the respondents respectively. Thus, there was some uncertainty about who would take responsibility for implementing the aspects of policy which dealt with internal efficiency when this aspect should be amenable to clear specification of implementers. The development of sixth form work, on the other hand, was perceived to have had a much less clear specification of implementers, with 8.0 percent of the respondents giving it a high rating of implementer specification. This confirms a lack of consensus about the role sixth form work would play in a country whose higher education system entry requirement was school certificate rather than higher school certificate level passes.

The relationship between clear specification of the implementers and the overall support for and commitment to implement the objectives of the policy by the administrators, with an observed Chi-Square of 7.7512 and a correlated p-value of .0054 is significant at the .05 level (see Table 2). It is clear that the support and commitment to implementation was dependent on how clearly the policymakers identified the implementers for the various objectives. The clearer the specification of implementers the greater the level of support and commitment to the policy by the latter and consequently the better the chance of successful implementation.

Table 2

Degree of Specification of the Implementers (IMPIDENT)
and Support for and Commitment to the Objectives
by the Implementers (ASUPRT)

		ASUPRT		
		Low	High	Row Total
IMPIDENT	Low	8	3	11
		(26.7%)	(10.0%)	(36.7%)
	High	4	15	19
		(13.3%)	(50.0%)	(63.3%)
	Column Total	12	18	30
		(40.0%)	(60.0%)	(100%)

Observed significance level of correlated p-value = .0054*

" χ^2 =7.7512, significant at the .05 level.

The relationship between the specification of the implementers and the overall implementation outcomes, on the other hand, with a Chi-Square of .1435 and a correlated p-value of .7048 is not significant at the .05 level (see Table 3). This relationship suggests that overall implementation outcomes did not depend on the degree of specification of implementers and given the complex nature of this policy which had elements of both qualitative and quantitative improvements to the educational system, it is understandable that policy outcomes cannot depend on implementer specification alone. More design work on the qualitative improvements needed to be done by policymakers, curriculum and subject-matter experts at both micro- and macro-implementers' levels for positive outcomes and a predominantly

programmed approach did not provide ideal conditions for the necessary interaction among all players .

Table 3

Degree of Specification of the Implementers (IMPIDENT) and Overall Implementation Outcomes (OUTCO1)

		OUTCO1		
		Low	High	Row Total
IMPIDENT	Low	5	6	11
		(16.7%)	(20.0%)	(36.7%)
	High	10	9	19
		(33.3%)	(30.0%)	(63.3%)
	Column Total	15	15	30
		(50.0%)	(50.0%)	(100%)

Observed significance level of correlated p-value = .7048

,, χ^2 =.1435, not significant at the .05 level.

Generally, these results confirmed Berman's (1980) suggestion that clear specification of implementers at the policy making stage positively influences implementation by making clear what their roles are. Unless implementers know what their roles are policy, no matter how much it may be based on good theory, cannot translate into action.

Training of Implementers

Among the many factors that could affect implementation is that of technical capacity to implement (Williams, 1975). Aspects of technical capacity include intra-organizational communication (i.e. the means of communicating decisions between the field and the headquarters of the Ministry of

Education), an effective administrative structure, and a sufficient number of individuals with requisite administrative and technical skills in appropriate areas in order for implementation to move from the macro- to micro-level as well as to deal with those tasks that are the domain of the macro-level. In addition, there needs to be a critical mass of the skills at the local level to implement innovations. In the case of the Malawi policy, a skills deficiency was recognized and training for administrators, including planners and inspectors was conceived as an integral part of the comprehensive plan. Respondents indicated that teachers had most adequate training arrangements (given a high rating by 53.3 percent of the respondents), professional staff (i.e., inspectors and planners) with 42.9 percent came next and headmasters and general administrators with 31.0 percent and 33.3 percent respectively came last (see Table 4). The mean score, on the other hand suggests that even for teachers the provision for training could at best be classified as moderate (i.e., a mean of 3.3 on the 5-point Likert-type scale), while general administrators and headmasters had means below 3.

Table 4

Adequacy of Training Provision for Administrators, Teachers, and Headmasters

		Degree of Adequacy				
Category of Staff	N	Low	Medium	High	Mean	Std. Dev
General Administrators	30	14 (46.7%)	6 (20.0%)	10 (33.3%)	2.90	1.24
Professionals	28	7 (25.0%)	9 (32.1%)	12 (42.9%)	3.14	1.00
Teachers	30	6 (20.0%)	8 (26.7%)	16 (53.3%)	3.33	1.12
Headmasters	29	14 (48.2%)	6 (20.7%)	9 (31.0%)	2.62	1.23

The training that was provided was of a general nature and not specifically linked to the policy. This point is confirmed by the relationship between the

extent to which adequate training provision was made and the overall implementation outcomes. With an observed Chi-Square of .1333 and a correlated p-value of .7150 was not significant at the .05 level (see Table 5).

Table 5

Adequacy of Overall Training Provision (TRAIN)
by Overall Implementation Outcomes (OUTCO1)

		OUTCO1		
		Low	High	Row Total
TRAIN	Low	6 (20.0%)	8 (26.7%)	14 (46.7%)
	High	9 (30.0%)	7 (23.3%)	16 (53.3%)
	Column Total	15 (50.0%)	15 (50.0%)	30 (100%)

Observed significance level of correlated p-value = .7150

,, χ^2 =.1333, not significant at the .05 level.

However, when disaggregated data are used the provision of certain components of training is significantly related with the outcomes. The provision of training for professional staff at the headquarters of the Ministry of Education and Culture with an observed Chi-Square of 3.7582 and a correlated p-value of .0525 (see Table 6), is significantly related with the acceptability of the changes to macro-level implementers. These results show that the more training was provided for the macro-level implementers the more comfortable they felt about the changes intended by the policy.

Table 6

Adequacy of Training Provision for professionals (TAPROF) by Acceptability of Changes to the Professionals at the Headquarters (OUTC2)

		OUTC2		
		Low	High	Row Total
TAPROF	Low	3	13	16
		(11.1%)	(48.1%)	(59.3%)
	High	6	5	11
		(22.2%)	(18.5%)	(40.7%)
	Column Total	9	18	27
		(33.3%)	(66.7%)	(100%)

Observed significance level of correlated p-value = .0525*

" χ^2 =3.7585, significant at the .05 level.

Similarly, the adequacy of training provision for teachers meant that administrators were more comfortable about policy changes because they knew that they had competent staff at the building level to carry out the policy. The observed Chi-Square for this relationship is 4.5487 with a correlated p-value of .0329, and is significant at the .05 level (see Table 7). These findings show that the more the provision made for the training of teachers the more confident about the changes were the macro-level implementers.

Table 7

Adequacy of Training Provision for Teachers (TEACH) by Acceptability of Changes to the Administrators at Headquarters (OUTC2)

		OUTC2		
		Low	High	Row Total
TEACH	Low	7 (24.1%)	7 (24.1%)	14 (48.3%)
	High	2 (6.9%)	13 (44.8%)	15 (51.7%)
	Column Total	9 (31.0%)	18 (69.0%)	27 (100%)

Observed significance level of correlated p-value = .0329*

" χ^2 =4.5487, significant at the .05 level.

Given that the provision was modest at best, there was some uncertainty about implementation, and in turn, there was also some doubt about implementation outcomes of the policy.

Forecast of Resources

Table 8 shows that most respondents rated the accuracy of the forecast for personnel needs as moderate (53.6 percent), while the proportion who rated it low (21.4 percent) was close to those who rated it high (25.0 percent). The forecast for financial resources is somewhat different in that there is an almost equal number of respondents for each of the 3 categories of low, medium, and high (i.e. 34.5 percent, 31.0 percent, and 34.5 percent respectively). Thus, forecasts for personnel resource needs were more

accurate than forecasts for financial resources because it was difficult to estimates the needs of resources for qualitative improvements especially when detailed plans had not been worked out.

Table 8

Degree of Accuracy of Projections for Resource Needs

		Degree of Accuracy				
Resource	N	Low	Medium	High	Mean	Std. Dev
Personnel (PROPPS)	28	6	15	7	3.00	1.12
		(21.4%)	(53.6%)	(25.0%)		
Finance (PROF)	29	10	9	10	3.00	1.16
		(34.5%)	(31.0%)	(34.5%)		

The relationship between the degree of accuracy in forecasting the personnel needs and the degree of success in achieving the original objectives, an observed Chi-Square of .4912 and a correlated p-value of .4834 is not significant at the .05 level. This relationship suggests that the achievement of original objectives did not depend on the accuracy of forecasts for personnel needs (see Table 9).

Table 9

Accuracy in Forecasting Personnel Needs(PROPS) and Achievement of Original Objectives (OUTC3)

		OUTC3		
		Low	High	Row Total
PROPS	Low	15	6	21
		(53.6%)	(21.4%)	(75.0%)
	High	4	3	7
		(14.3%)	(10.7%)	(25.0%)
	Column Total	12	9	28
		(67.9%)	(32.1%)	(100%)

Observed significance level of correlated p-value = .4834

χ^2 =4912, not significant at the .05 level.

On the other hand, the relationship between the degree of accuracy of forecasting financial needs and the achievement of original objectives, has an observed Chi-Square of 5.9831, and a correlated p-value of .0144, and is significant at the .05 level. This result suggests that the achievement of original objectives depended on the degree of accuracy in forecasting financial resource needs. Thus, low accuracy in forecasts is likely to result in low achievement of original goals (see Table 10) especially if resources fall short of what is needed.

Table 10

Accuracy in Forecasting Financial Needs (PROF) by Achievement of Original Objectives (OUTC3)

		OUTC3		
		Low	High	Row Total
PROF	Low	16 (55.2%)	3 (10.3%)	19 (65.5%)
	High	4 (13.8%)	6 (20.7%)	10 (34.5%)
	Column Total	20 (69.0%)	9 (31.0%)	29 (100%)

Observed significance level of correlated p-value = .0144*

" χ^2 =5.9831, significant at the .05 level.

Overall these results confirmed that unless forecasts of both financial and personnel resources can be accurately made, it would be unrealistic to expect implementation of policy to take place as planned over a long period of time. If forecasts result in excessive resources being made available, we might expect implementation to exceed expectations, all things being equal. However, for most social reforms, especially in Third World Countries, resources are most often not adequate. In Malawi this problem was and still is compounded by the dependence of the economy on primary commodities, and the narrowness of the economic base. The vagaries of weather and the instability of world market prices for primary products suggest that only short term forecasts and budget plans were feasible. Thus, long term national development plans, which this policy (i.e. 1973/74 - 1980/81) was a part of, tend in effect to be collapsed into a series of one year plans. As Kaunda (1988) pointed out, although such one year plans may be a legitimate strategy for dealing with environmental uncertainty, their short term focus makes them ill-suited for bringing about basic structural changes.

Involvement in Implementation

According to respondents (i.e., administrators, headmasters, and teachers) that the most involved groups or agencies were international donor agencies (rated high by 78.1 percent), next came the Planning Unit (77.4 percent), Project Implementation Unit (75.1 percent), Secondary Education Administration (65.7 percent), the Ministry of Finance (60.0 percent), Economic Planning and Development Division (53.2 percent), secondary school headmasters (45.7 percent), the Cabinet (45.7 percent), and secondary school teachers (42.7 percent).

International donor agencies because of their role as providers of funds for development were the most involved. The Ministry of Finance which determined budget allocations to various government agencies was only moderately involved, as was the Economic Planning and Development Division which determined the national development priorities and monitored development programs (see Table 11). Interviews with some senior officials of these two ministries confirmed that there was uncertainty about the Ministry of Education's commitment to the policy. Ministry of Finance officials did not think that the Ministry of Education's priorities were well articulated during budget review meetings and did not make a compelling case for additional funds.

Table 11

Groups and Agencies Involved in the Process of Implementing the Malawi Secondary Development Policy

Group/ Agency	Frequency(Percent)*	Rank
International Donor Agencies	78.1	1
Planning Unit	77.4	2
Project Implementation Unit	75.1	3
Secondary Education Administration	65.1	4
Ministry of Finance	60.0	5
Economic Planning & Development Division	53.2	6
Secondary School Headmasters	45.7	7.5
The Cabinet	45.7	7.5
Inspectorate	45.5	9
Secondary School Teachers	42.7	10
General Administrators (Headquarters)	39.8	11
Ministry of Works & Supplies	36.6	12
Tutors of Teacher Training Colleges	27.9	13
Students	24.5	14
Parents	17.6	15

* Based only on the high ratings of involvement.

The relationship between the degree of involvement in the implementation of policy and the overall support for and commitment to the objectives by both administrators and teachers is significant at the .05 level (see Table 12). In this relationship the observed Chi-Square is 10.3166 and the correlated p-value is .0354. This relationship confirms that overall support for and commitment to the objectives was dependent on the degree of involvement in the policy implementation process by administrators and teachers. The greater the level of involvement by both administrators and teachers the more likely was their support and commitment to the policy objectives.

As Hambleton (1983) points out, a key factor shaping the implementation process centers around the 'mechanical' difficulties of achieving coordination

between and among a multiplicity of agents involved in the implementation process. Mayntz (1979, p 642) extends Hambleton's point by suggesting that most sector policies are linked by relations of inter-dependence and that the agencies charged with the responsibility of implementing a policy must enter into horizontal relations of cooperation. What is applicable to inter-agency cooperation, with minor modification, also applies to intra-agency situations to the extent that cooperation, albeit of a vertical nature especially for top-down approaches is a *sine qua non* for effective implementation. These results show that there was less involvement in the implementation process by teachers and headmasters. Although there was a general commitment and support for the policy by micro-level implementers, the rather low involvement in the process had negative effects on the outcomes.

Table 12

Degree of Involvement in Implementation (IMPILVO) by Overall Support for and Commitment to Policy Objectives (OSUPRT)

		OSUPRT			
		Low	Medium	High	Row Total
IMPILVO	Low	5	5	5	15
		(2.6%)	(2.6%)	(2.6%)	(7.7%)
	Medium	7	21	21	49
		(.3.6%)	(10.8%)	(10.8%)	(25.1%)
	High	12	43	76	131
		(6.2%)	(22.1%)	(39.0%)	(67.2%)
Column Total		24	49	129	193
		(12.3%)	(35.4%)	(52.3%)	(100%)

Observed significance level of correlated p-value = .0354*

,, $\chi^2 = 10.3166$, significant at the .05 level.

Communication Between Macro- and Micro-implementers

Tables 13 and 14 summarize perceptions of respondents of the nature and type of communication they received from the headquarters of the Ministry

of Education and Culture. Apart from the "clarity of message" in table 13, which was rated high by 48.0 percent of the respondents, responses regarding the other message characteristics (medium ratings of 68.2 percent, 66.7 percent, and 53.3 percent for consistency, repetitiveness, and helpfulness respectively) low ratings of more than 10.0 percent for these characteristics suggest a great uncertainty about the supportiveness of the communication from the headquarters. When reasonableness of communication is considered, 30.1 percent of the respondents thought that they had insufficient time to read and digest the messages; and 38.4 percent did not find the messages to make sense. On the other hand, 64.3 percent agreed that the macro-implementers expected compliance with their messages at the building level (see Table 14). It is clear that although there was uncertainty about the clarity, helpfulness, sensibleness and reasonableness of communications from the headquarters' macro-implementers still had high expectations that their instructions would be carried out. This is typical of a top-down approach to implementation that fails to recognize the need to match the approach and the nature and scope of policy to be implemented.

Table 13

Perceptions of Messages and Communications from the Headquarters

		Degree of Clarity, Helpfulness, Consistency etc.		
Message Characteristics	N	Low	Moderate	High
Clarity of Communication (CLARITY)	152	36	40	76
		(23.7%)	(26.3%)	(48.0%)
Helpfulness of Message (HELP)	152	20	81	51
		(13.2%)	(53.3%)	(33.5%)
Consistency of Communication (CONSIS)	148	17	101	30
		(11.5%)	(68.2%)	(20.3%)
Repetitiveness of Message (REPEAT)	138	24	92	22
		(17.4%)	(66.7%)	(15.9%)

Table 14

Reasonableness of Communication from the Headquarters

		Degree of Validity of Statement		
	N	Low	Moderate	High
Had time to read and digest message (READ)	146	44 (30.1%)	34 (23.3%)	68 (46.6%)
When compared to classroom tasks, the message did not make sense (SENSE)	138	53 (38.4%)	41 (29.7%)	44 (31.9%)
Superiors from headquarters did not really expect compliance with instructions they gave (EXPEC)	129	83 (64.3%)	20 (15.5%)	26 (20.2%)

The relationship between clarity and reasonableness of message the overall support for objectives has an observed Chi-Square of 2.1504 and a correlated p-value of .3412 (see Table 15). It is not significant at the .05 level, and this finding suggests that support for policy by implementers was not considered important because they really did not have a choice in the matter. All that was expected of them was compliance and blind obedience.

Table 15

Degree of Clarity and Reasonableness of Message (MESCLAR) by the Support of Policy by Field Implementers (TOSUPRT)

		TOSUPRT			
		Low	Medium	High	Row Total
MESCLAR	Low	3 (1.8%)	21 (12.8%)	22 (13.4%)	46 (28.0%)
	High	14 (8.5%)	41 (25.0%)	63 (38.4%)	118 (72.0%)
Column Total		17 (10.4%)	62 (37.8%)	85 (51.8%)	164 (100%)

Observed Significance level of correlated p-value = .3412

„ χ^2 = 2.1504, not significant at the .05 level.

However, the relationship between clarity and reasonableness of messages, and the overall implementation outcomes (see Table 16) has an observed Chi-Square of 13.4009 with a correlated p-value of .0012, and is significant at the .05 level. This finding suggests that overall implementation outcomes depended on the clarity and reasonableness of the policy message from the headquarters of the Ministry to headmasters and teachers.

Table 16

Degree of Clarity and Reasonableness of Message (MESCLAR) and Overall implementation Outcomes (OUTCO2)

		OUTCO2			
		Low	Medium	High	Row Total
MESCLAR	Low	23	19	4	46
		(14.0%)	(11.6%)	(2.4%)	(28.0%)
	High	28	56	34	118
		(17.1%)	(34.1%)	(20.7%)	(72.0%)
Column Total		51	75	38	164
		(31.1%)	(45.7%)	(23.2%)	(100%)

Observed Significance level of correlated p-value = .0012*

„ χ^2 = 13.4009, significant at the .05 level.

Communication serves the purpose of creating effective relationships within and among organizations (Rondinelli, Middleton, and Verspoor, 1990) regarding resources and information. The desirability of a high degree of clarity of communication will depend on the nature of change and the chosen strategy for implementing a particular policy. Where a top- down approach is the strategy of choice, more clear communication from the top to the lower echelons is desirable. If complex changes are being attempted that involve a variety of tasks, greater complexity and use of an adaptive approach (Berman 1980) some degree of ambiguity may not only be tolerable but desirable to facilitate participation in implementation decisions by those charged with the implementation of an innovation. As Hambleton (1983, p 407) points out

'there are limits to the degree of clarity we can expect in a policy message'. Communication in this case study was, at best, moderate in terms of its clarity, helpfulness, consistency, and repetitiveness of message. Given that the Ministry 's method of choice of implementation was a top-down or programmed, clearer and more helpful messages would have been more appropriate, especially when there was such a high expectation that micro-level implementers would comply with instructions from the headquarters.

Discussion of Findings

The basic understanding is that explanations of success or failure of implementation of policy lie in the activities that are characterized by interactions among different players at the policy formulation stage, and the stage when those charged with the responsibility of addressing the problematic situation use the resources available within a given environment or context for the purpose of bringing about change in the policy environment. As Grindle (1980, p. 6) points out the task of implementation is to establish a link that allows the goals of public policies to be realized as outcomes of governmental activity. This case study has attempted to assess the role of a mismatch between the nature and scope of policy and the strategy adopted for implementation. This section of the paper sysnthethizes the findings and provides insights that would inform future policies in Malawi and hopefully extend the debate on designing policies that can be implemented.

Participation in Policy Formulation

The findings of this study confirm the dominant role of the Ministry of Education and Culture at the policy formulation stage. As the agency that is legally charged with the responsibility, subject to parliament, for the formulation of education policy in accordance with the Education Ordinance of 1962 (UNESCO, 1971), its inclusion as "insiders" in this process was understandable. It is important that the Ministry of Education should play a leading role in matters of education, but they need the support of so many

other groups and agencies. In this study it is shown that the greater involvement of financial and planning agencies, the Ministry of Finance, and the Economic Planning and Development Division, and the other agencies and groups assured support of these groups for the policies. Although support alone did not necessarily assure the achievement of objectives, it was an important start, especially in light of the Ministry's dependence on the resources which these other agencies possessed. Interviews with officials of some of these agencies suggest that the Ministry of Education and Culture was not sufficiently persuasive in resource mobilization and allocation discussions. These other agencies did not see themselves as sharing in the ownership of the policy. Interview respondents (80 percent) admitted minimal involvement in education policy formulation of these other players. One well placed interviewee pointed out that 'the plan was an "academic exercise" in which only the Planning Unit believed.' Equally important, MOEC did not include representation from headmasters and teachers at the building level in this process, and yet these would have provided a reality check about the feasibility of the implementation of the plan. Headmasters and teachers would have advised headquarters' administrators about the requirements for a feasible and viable policy for vocationalizing secondary education.

Policy Implementers

It is understandable that implementers from the headquarters of the Ministry of Education and Culture for expanding the physical infrastructure and increasing enrollments were clearly identified because these were aspects of the policy that were amenable to a top-down approach. Specification of implementers for practical subjects from the headquarters created problems because it did not include building level people.

As with policy formulation, the implementation effort was dominated by departments/units in the headquarters of Ministry of Education and international donor agencies. Planning and financial agencies (Ministry of Finance, and Economic Planning and Development Division) were not 'insiders' but probably 'near circle players,' while secondary school headmasters, the cabinet, the inspectorate and secondary school teachers were

in the 'far circle' category. Teachers and headmasters are the ones responsible for ensuring that qualitative improvements translate into positive student outcomes at the building level and yet they were not "insiders" in the implementation process.

Findings of this study conform that the degree of involvement in the implementation process depended on one's position. Relative to the sample population size, central administrators had greater involvement in the implementation process than headmasters and teachers. Most important, the extent to which teachers got involved in the implementation process determined the degree of their support for policy objectives. Thus, teachers supported the objectives much less than the central administrators, especially the objectives relating to internal efficiency. For example, objectives like greater utilization of existing personnel was like asking teachers to work twice as much for the same pay and was unacceptable.

Commitment to objectives is enhanced by involvement in the implementation process which in turn will assure overall positive implementation outcomes of policy. As Berman and McLaughlin (1976) pointed out, when people are involved in decisions relating to the implementation process, they are also likely to accept the changes being introduced and hence mutual adaptation between innovation and its setting is likely to take place. Central level administrators were more involved and therefore, more likely to perceive the overall implementation outcomes as successful. Headmasters and teachers were minimally involved and thus, less committed to the changes sought by the policy.

Planning for Resources

Forecasting of both personnel needs and financial resources was less accurate possibly because of managerial skill constraints but also because of the uncertain local and external economic environments in which change was supposed to take place. In this study, since long term changes were sought, resource mobilization was critical. Forecasts for personnel, and more specifically teachers, did not appear to have significantly affected the extent to

which the original objectives were achieved. The Forecast of teacher supply needs for the expanded secondary system, an estimated stock of 1005 teachers by end of the plan period came short of the forecast of 1,050. This did not have adverse impacts because the system did not expand and the student/teacher ratio was 25:1 as it was at the beginning of the plan period.

Forecasting financial needs, on the other hand, in part explained under-achievement of original objectives. The results of the survey showed that poor forecasts lead to low attainment of goals. For routine tasks and subject to availability people and other resources for accomplishing the tasks, good financial forecasts are important in explaining under achievement of objectives. However, if tasks are complex and people though willing, lack certain attributes necessary for job performance, and or other necessary resources are not available then forecasts are only a part of the much larger problem. In this policy, there appeared to be much less effort on the part of macro-level implementers to ensure that any departures or modifications to the original plans were carefully documented and less and less of policy components were included in each successive annual budget. This created doubts as to whether the plan was for implementation or as a strategy for meeting the conditionalities of donor aid. Sometimes policies are designed to gain resources, rather than for faithful implementation. This study did not turn up any evidence that this was the case.

The importance of financial resources in aiding or hindering implementation should not be underestimated. At a time when the secondary education system was supposed to undergo a major reform and in great need of resources, allocations for recurrent expenditure declined from 16.2 percent in 1974/75 to 11.3 in 1980/81 of total government revenue expenditure account. Capital account expenditures except for one year were generally bellow 9.0 percent. This reflects the moderate priority accorded to education as a whole. Within the education system itself, recurrent expenditure for the secondary level which was in line with education's share of the national revenue expenditure, declined from 16.9 percent to 14.2 percent during the plan period, while capital expenditure fluctuated between 6.4 percent and 31.1 percent. Interview results revealed that allocations were based both on economic and political criteria. Simply stated the economic criteria demanded

that as an agriculture based economy, Malawi needed to open up the agricultural lands by developing a sound road network. Transportation accounted for over 30 percent of capital expenditures, followed by Agriculture (18 percent), while education was in the third place (6.7 percent). Investment priority for borrowed funds was accorded to income generating projects. Only soft loans and grants were applied to education depending upon how clearly and convincingly the latter articulated its case to the financial and planning agencies.

If Malawi's political leadership wanted to promote secondary education above other social services, it could have allocated a larger amount to education. One very well placed civil servant confirmed that all that was needed was a decree from the then autocratic president that education needed a higher allocation than other sectors. Recently, with the introduction of Universal Primary Education, education's share of the government budget has increased to 40 percent of the total expenditure. This confirms that shortage of funds and/or inaccurate forecasting alone cannot account for implementation failure.

Training of Implementers

Although evidence is not over-whelming, this study shows that adequate training provision linked to the policy for professional staff of the headquarters of the Ministry of Education and Culture (educational planners, economists, statisticians, and inspectors of schools) and teachers at the building level could have ensured acceptability of the changes among the implementers. However, making provision for training in the policy document or plan is one thing, and actually providing the training is quite another, as the case of forecasting of personnel shows.

At both the macro- and micro-implementation levels training linked to the objectives of the plan for the professional staff and teachers was important in ensuring that changes suggested by the policy were acceptable to the implementers (see Nyirenda, 1991). In the case of the building level implementers more support for the objectives was given if the policy package included training, and at this level as already observed, more training for

teachers explained success or failure in the introduction of practical subjects in the secondary school curriculum. In addition this study shows that managerial skill constraints were significantly related to the adjustment in objectives and targets and therefore further strengthens the case for the role of training in the implementation process. Similarly, the evidence from the survey of teachers and headmasters suggests that inadequate teaching work force is a potent explanation for less than optimal implementation success.

Specific training of teachers for practical subjects such as technical subjects, run into serious problems. MOEC made arrangements with the Polytechnic for a small annual intake of 14 such trainees. However, once trained these teachers found jobs in the private sector where terms and conditions of service were more attractive. Another reason for loss of these teachers was that the procedure for recruitment in the MOEC was so complex that it took a long time for graduates to be recruited and included on the payroll. In addition, the training policy adopted by MOEC was a major limiting factor, so much so that by the end of the plan period only 30 had graduated from the Polytechnic due to an intake that was determined by MOEC's manpower requirements.

Communication

Clear communication for the routine tasks of increasing enrollments and building new physical structures was necessary for positive implementation outcomes. Confusing and unhelpful messages that lacked consistency hampered implementation. A few teachers interviewed by the researcher pointed out that they were frustrated by the way MOEC treated them. An example was given about routine delays in approval of emergency vacations which needed to go through a complex bureaucratic process at MOEC's headquarters and if they tried to follow-up on their applications they were branded as trouble makers. These teachers' conclusion was that the name Ministry of Education and Culture was a misnomer. In stead the name should be the Ministry of Dedication and Torture because the Ministry expects devotion or selfless service from teachers and in return it does not treat them professionally. Communication between macro- and micro-level implementers needed not only to make sense but had to be reasonable to

solicit positive action. For practical subjects and other qualitative improvements, a dialogue was needed between the macro- and micro-level implementers to resolve misunderstandings, but more importantly, to share ownership of the policy. Thus, expectation of compliance with instructions from the headquarters by teachers and headmasters only ensured partial implementation of the introduction of practical subjects in only the 12 demonstration schools with inadequate resources.

Conclusion

It is tempting to conclude that the 1973-81 secondary education plan was fantasy and not really meant to be implemented because the resources needed were beyond the capacity of the government. This study does not entirely support this view. During the implementation period when Malawi's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) was growing at 7.1 percent, the country's expenditure on education fell from 16.9 percent to 14.2 percent. This suggests that education was accorded low priority. In contrast, the Malawi government in its budget for 1995 has allocated 40 percent of its total revenue for education including Universal Primary Education (UPE). In an authoritarian regime, as was the case during this policy's implementation period, elevation of education to high priority needed the decision of one person, the then Life president of Malawi. An interview with an important official for this study revealed that this level of political support was not provided.

The implementation of the 1973/74-1980/81 secondary education plan fell far short of expectations in large part because of a mismatch between the preferred top-down strategy of implementation and the nature and scope of the policy. Since a highly centralized system of management was responsible for implementing the policy, an important outcome of this approach was limiting the participation of school personnel at the building level at both the design and implementation stages. Policy objectives e.g., vocationalization of education, lacked the support of those charged with the responsibility of carrying out curricular changes at the building level; lacked the commitment and ability at the highest levels of MOEC bureaucracy to articulate the importance of developing and improving secondary level education during the annual budget negotiations; had a low priority when compared with

other sectors competing for government resources, and offered inadequate training opportunities for school level implementers.

A highly centralized organization structure and a top-down communication system alienated headmasters and teachers in both decisionmaking and policy implementation. The expectation that teachers can blindly obey instructions from their supervisors from MOEC' headquarters and effectively implement qualitative improvements in education was unrealistic and caused much frustration to teachers. In addition, when teachers continue to be treated unprofessionally, they thought that MOEC's headquarters staff were not interested in their personal welfare and professional growth and yet expected good services from teachers.

Given the current expansion at primary school level (nearly doubling enrollments at the primary level), following the introduction of UPE in 1994, there will be pressure on the secondary level not only for more places but also for better quality programs (i.e., curriculum, assessment, internal efficiency etc.). It is hoped that this study will provide useful lessons to Malawi and other systems that are on the threshold of comprehensive educational change. Teachers and headmasters must not be viewed as the problem. Rather, they should be seen as part of the solution in the change process in which they should be allowed to play a meaningful role.

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APPENDIX A

Frequencies, Means, Standard Deviations of Levels of Influence by Groups and Agencies Involved in Policy Making

		Degree of Influence					
Group/Agency	N	Low	Medium	High	Dont Know	Mean	Std. Dev
Ministry of Education	28	1 (3.3%)	1 (3.3%)	26 (92.9%)		4.6	.8
Ministry of Finance	29	6 (20.6%)	3 (10.3%)	20 (69.0%)		3.8	1.2
Economic planning and Development Division	30	4 (13.3%)	8 (26.7%)	18 (60.0%)		3.7	1.1
The Cabinet	28	4 (16.0%)	5 (20.0%)	14 (56.0%)	2 (8.0%)	3.5	1.6
Personnel Management and Training	27	8 (29.6%)	8 (29.6%)	11 (40.7%)		3.1	1.2
School of Education	28	8 (28.6%)	7 (25.0%)	11 (39.3%)	2 (7.1%)	2.9	1.6
Teachers and Headmasters	28	8 (28.6%)	8 (28.6%)	8 (28.6%)	4 (14.3%)	2.6	1.7
Ministry of Agriculture	25	20 (80.0%)	1 (4.0%)	2 (8.0%)	1 (4.0%)	1.7	1.1
Ministry of Works and Supplies	28	13 (46.4%)	2 (7.1%)	6 (21.4%)	7 (25.0%)	1.7	1.6
Ministry of Trade and Industry	27	16 (59.2%)	1 (3.7%)	5 (18.5%)	5 (18.5%)	1.5	1.4
Malawi Book Service	27	14 (51.8%)	3 (11.1%)	3 (11.1%)	7 (25.9%)	1.4	1.4

APPENDIX B

Frequencies of the Degree of Specification of Implementers for the Policy Objectives

		Degree of Specification					
Objectives	N	Low	Medium	High	Dont Know	Mean	Std.Dev.
Practical Subjects	30	4 (13.4%)	8 (26.7%)	18 (60.0%)		3.90	1.29
Efficient Use of Physical Facilities	30	6 (20.0%)	7 (23.3%)	17 (56.6%)		3.60	1.32
Efficient Use of Personnel	30	7 (23.3%)	10 (33.3%)	13 (43.3%)		3.26	1.28
Efiicient Use of Funds	29	5 (16.2%)	12 (41.4%)	12 (41.4%)		3.44	1.12
More Sixth Form Work	25	17 (68.0%)	4 (16.0%)	2 (8.0%)	2 (8.0%)	1.76	1.20
Additional Buildings	30	6 (20.0%)	5 (16.7%)	19 (63.3%)		3.76	1.13
Increased Enrollmnet	29	4 (13.8%)	4 (13.8%)	20 (68.9%)		3.69	1.36

Economic Planning and Development Division(EPD)	171	19	23	91	38	2.99	1.9
		(11.1%)	(13.5%)	(53.2%)	(22.2%)		
Secondary School Teachers (TEACHS)	171	49	30	73	19	2.88	1.7
		(28.6%)	(17.5%)	(42.7%)	(11.1%)		
General Administrators (GA)	176	38	41	70	27	1.79	1.6
		(21.6%)	(23.3%)	(39.8%)	(15.3%)		
The Cabinet (CAB)	173	22	24	79	48	2.72	2.0
		(12.7%)	(13.9%)	(45.7%)	(27.7%)		
Ministry of Works & Supplies (MOWS)	180	45	26	66	43	2.48	1.8
		(25.0%)	(14.4%)	(36.6%)	(23.9%)		
Tutors of TeacherTraining Colleges (TUTORS)	176	55	29	49	43	2.19	1.7
		(31.2%)	(16.5%)	(27.9%)	(24.4%)		
Students (STUDS)	172	74	20	42	36	2.02	1.7
		(43.0%)	(11.6%)	(24.5%)	(20.9%)		
Parents	176	84	23	31	38	1.79	1.5
		(47.8%)	(13.1%)	(17.6%)	(21.6%)		

Economic Planning and Development Division(EPD)	171	19 (11.1%)	23 (13.5%)	91 (53.2%)	38 (22.2%)	2.99	1.9
Secondary School Teachers (TEACHS)	171	49 (28.6%)	30 (17.5%)	73 (42.7%)	19 (11.1%)	2.88	1.7
General Administrators (GA)	176	38 (21.6%)	41 (23.3%)	70 (39.8%)	27 (15.3%)	1.79	1.6
The Cabinet (CAB)	173	22 (12.7%)	24 (13.9%)	79 (45.7%)	48 (27.7%)	2.72	2.0
Ministry of Works & Supplies (MOWS)	180	45 (25.0%)	26 (14.4%)	66 (36.6%)	43 (23.9%)	2.48	1.8
Tutors of TeacherTraining Colleges (TUTORS)	176	55 (31.2%)	29 (16.5%)	49 (27.9%)	43 (24.4%)	2.19	1.7
Students (STUDS)	172	74 (43.0%)	20 (11.6%)	42 (24.5%)	36 (20.9%)	2.02	1.7
Parents	176	84 (47.8%)	23 (13.1%)	31 (17.6%)	38 (21.6%)	1.79	1.5